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TIPS FOR KEEPING PETS SAFE ON HALLOWEEN

The Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center encourages pet owners to take safety precautions to keep their pets safe during Halloween.

“Dogs and cats are creatures of habit and often become frightened or agitated by the unaccustomed sights and sounds of trick-or-treat,” said Dale Galassie, the Health Department’s Executive Director. “Pet owners should be aware that some Halloween rituals pose dangers for pets.”

The Health Department recommends keeping pets safely inside, away from trick-or-treaters and other Halloween activities. This will ensure that pets won’t become frightened or feel threatened at the sight of costumed children. Cats, especially black ones, may be the targets of pranksters. In addition, frequently opened doors provide a perfect opportunity for escape, which can go unnoticed during all of the commotion. Be sure all pets are wearing collars with ID tags in case of an accidental escape.

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Keep candy safely out of your pet's reach. Candy can be harmful to pets and chocolate is toxic to cats, dogs and ferrets. Instead, have a few of your pet's favorite treats on hand.

Keep pets away from live flames, such as jack-o'-lanterns and candles, and restrict your pets' access to hanging decorations. Pets are curious and can become tangled in streamers or even choke on some decorations if they chew on them.

Resist the urge to put your furry friend in a costume. With rare exception, pets dislike the confinement of "clothes" and "masks," and flowing capes can cause injuries to pets if they get caught on something.

Don't bring the family dog trick-or-treating with the children. Children may be distracted and dogs may become difficult to handle during the noise and confusion of the festivities. A lost dog or dog bite will quickly end your child's Halloween fun.

"Halloween can be safe for all members of your family-- those with both two and four legs-- if you take some simple precautions," said Galassie. "So keep your pets safe and inside and have a Happy Halloween."

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